

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 SAM-01 SAB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19

OMB-01 DRC-01 SCCT-02 /161 W
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R 180900Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0905

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 2702

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 1412

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

BEIRUT ALSO PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO, XF

SUBJECT: KING HUSSEIN AND PM RIFAI ON JORDANIAN MIDEAST
NEGOTIATING POSITION

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REF: A. USINFO WASHDC 1520242 MAR 74 (NOTAL)

B. USINFO WASHDC 1421242 MZR 74 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GOJ HAS USED KING HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO US AS OCCASION TO PRESENT TO JORDANIAN AND WORLD AUDIENCE CURRENT JORDANIAN MIDEAST NEGOTIATION POSITION. STATEMENTS BY KING HUSSEIN AND PM RIFAI INDICATE JORDAN AWAITING ISRAELI REPLY TO RECENT JORDANIAN DISENGAGEMENT PROPOSAL REGARDING WEST BANK; INDICATE JORDAN DOES NOT OBJECT TO SEPARATE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT SOME STAGE IN GENEVA; STATE THAT ONCE ISRAEL WITHDRAWS FROM WEST BANK ALL PALESTINIANS SHOULD EXPRESS SELF-DETERMINATION REGARDING WHETHER TO FORM INDEPENDENT STATE, FEDERATE OR UNITE WITH JORDAN; RE-ASSERT REQUIREMENT FOR ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER ARAB JERUSALEM BUT IMPLY FLEXIBILITY IN APPROACH TO CONCRETE ARRANGEMENTS. WE VIEW GOJ STATEMENTS AS ATTEMPT TO PUT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO ENGAGE SERIOUSLY IN WEST BANK NEGOTIATIONS AND AS TRY FOR RAPPROCHEMENT WITH EGYPT RE PALESTINIAN ISSUE PRIOR TO KING'S UPCOMING VISIT TO CAIRO. END SUMMARY.

2. JORDANIAN PRESS AND TV HAVE REPORTED VIRTUALLY ALL OF KING HUSSEIN'S MARCH 15 SPEECH TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB AND PRIME MINISTER ZAYD RIFAI'S MARCH 14 INTERVIEW ON NBC "TODAY SHOW", BOTH OF WHICH OUTLINE CURRENT GOJ POSITION ON MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS, WITH REGARD TO DISENGAGEMENT, PALESTINIAN ISSUE AND JERUSALEM.

3. DISENGAGEMENT: IN NBC INTERVIEW, PM RIFAI REVEALED PUBLICLY FOR FIRST TIME THAT GOJ PRESENTED PROPOSALS FOR ISRAELI-JORDANIAN DISENGAGEMENT DURING DR KISSINGER'S LAST VISIT TO JORDAN. RIFAI INDICATED JORDAN HAD NOT YET RECEIVED ANY ISRAELI REACTION BUT HOPED TO GET ONE "FROM OUR FRIENDS IN WASHINGTON SOON". RIFAI DEFINED DISENGAGEMENT AS "PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF THE ISRAELI FORCES FROM THEIR POSITIONS ON THE JORDAN RIVER TO THE WEST TO A SIGNIFICANT DEPTH" AND SUGGESTED

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THAT DISENGAGEMENT IS "IN EFFECT THE INITIATION OF THE PROCESS OF WITHDRAWAL, WHICH IS BASIC AND ESSENTIAL FOR PEACE". RIFAI ALSO AGREED THAT INSTALLATION OF UN OBSERVERS OR A POLICE FORCE AT INITIAL STAGE OF WITHDRAWAL "CERTAINLY CAN BE DISCUSSED".

4. PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION: OTHER MAJOR

REVELATION WAS RIFAI'S STATEMENT THAT "PALESTINIANS MUST PLAY A ROLE IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS." AND THAT JORDAN WOULD NOT OBJECT TO THEIR REPRESENTATION EVEN AS A SEPARATE GROUP. LATTER STATEMENT IS MOST EXPLICIT GOJ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO DATE THAT PALESTINIANS (PRESUMABLY PLO) COULD FORM SEPARATE GROUP AT GENEVA WITHOUT GOJ OPPOSITION. GOJ APPEARS TO HAVE MOVED IN PAST MONTH FROM PUBLIC POSTURE OF ACQUIESCENCE TO ENCOURAGEMENT OF PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS, ALTHOUGH TIMING NOT SPELLED OUT.

5. PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION: BOTH KING HUSSEIN AND PM RIFAI REITERATED JORDANIAN POSITION THAT ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM WEST BANK (PRESUMABLY EVOLVING FROM JORDANIAN DISENGAGEMENT PROPOSAL) IS "FIRST AND ESSENTIAL STEP" IN RESTORING RIGHTS TO PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. RIFAI INDICATED THAT "ONCE THE WITHDRAWAL IS EFFECTED, THE PALESTINIANS HAVE TO EXERCISE THEIR RIGHTS OF SELF-DETERMINATION". IN FULLER TREATMENT OF ISSUE TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, KING HUSSEIN STATED THAT JORNALISTS ARE INCORRECT IN REPORTING THAT JORDAN HAD "ANNEXED" WEST BANK IN 1948. RATHER, PALESTINIAN NOTABLES HAD PETITIONED KING ABDULLAH TO "UNITE" PALESTINE WITH JORDAN AND THEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF UNION IN NABLUS AND JERICHO CONVOCAIONS. KING HUSSEIN ALSO INDICATED THAT "SINCE 1950 HALF THE PARLIAMENT, CABINET, GOVERNMENT AND ARMY HAVE BEEN PALESTINIANS WITH FULL POLITICAL RIGHTS."

6. IN OBVIOUSLY CONCILIATORY GESTURE TO PALESTINIANS, CONFIDENTIAL

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KING HUSSEIN DIRECTLY ATTACKED ISRAEL'S POSITION THAT IT WILL NOT TOLERATE AN INDEPENDENT STATE OF PALESTINE ON WEST BANK, SAYING "ISRAEL HAS NO RIGHT TO MAKE SUCH A DECISION. NEITHER HAVE I". (LATTER SENTENCE WAS EDITED OUT OF AMMAN PRESS VERSION.) KING STIPULATED THAT CHOICE MUST BE MADE BY PALESTINIANS "IN AN UNTHREATENED ATMOSPHERE THAT WILL PERMIT TRUE SELF-DETERMINATION. THEY MAY BE FREE TO CHOOSE TO SET UP AN ENTIRELY INDEPENDENT STATE; THEY MAY SEEK A FORM OF FEDERATION WITH JORDAN OR THEY MAY CHOOSE TO REMAIN UNITED WITH US. WHATEVER THEIR CHOICE, I WILL SUPPORT IT. THEIR CHOICE MUST BE MADE FREE FROM THREAT OR INTIMIDATION BY ANY SOURCE."

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 SAM-01 SAB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19

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R 180900Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0906
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USINT DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION GENEVA
USUN NEW YORK 2703
USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
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7. PERHAPS SIGNIFICANTLY, KING HUSSEIN DID NOT
CONFINE EXERCISE OF PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINA-
TION JUST TO PALESTINIANS CURRENTLY LIVING ON
WEST BANK BUT RATHER TO ENTIRE COMMUNITY OF
PALESTINIANS. "PALESTINIANS ARE WIDELY
SCATTERED TODAY. BESIDES THOSE LIVING IN JORDAN,
MANY LIVE IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN GAZA, LEBANON AND
SYRIA AS WELL AS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES ALL OVER
THE WORLD. WHAT THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS ARE ABOUT

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THE FUTURE HAVE YET TO BE DETERMINED. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THEY MUST BE GIVEN THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION."

8. KING HUSSEIN INDICATED HIS HOPE THAT PALESTINIANS "WILL REMAIN WITH JORDAN AND JOIN US IN BUILDING A MODERN, PROSPEROUS ARAB STATE". WHILE INDICATING THAT JORDAN IS ON ITS WAY INDEPENDENTLY TO AN "EVENTUAL INEVITABLE ARRIVAL AT SELF-SUFFICIENCY."

9. JERUSALEM: KING HUSSEIN ONCE AGAIN STATED POSITION THAT "AN INTEGRAL PART OF ANY SETTLEMENT MUST RECOGNIZE ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER ARAB JERUSALEM BUT INDICATED THAT FORMULA WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT GUARANTEEING EQUAL RELIGIOUS RIGHTS FOR MOSLEM, CHRISTIAN AND JEW AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE HOLY SITES THEMSELVES. KING INDICATED THAT PEACE IS IMPOSSIBLE IF ISRAELIS HOLD TO POSITION THAT THEY WILL NOT NEGOTIATE OVER ARAB JERUSALEM. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT "A RETURN TO THE OLD DIVIDED CITY WITH A NO MAN'S LAND IS IMPOSSIBLE AS A PERMANENT SOLUTION", KING HUSSEIN INDICATED A FORMULA MUST BE FOUND "BASED ON SPIRITUAL FREEDOM FOR ALL UNDER ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER ARAB JERUSALEM AND THE MOSLEM AND CHRISTIAN ARABS WHO LIVE THERE. I DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING SUCH A FORMULA BUT I CANNOT OVERESTIMATE ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE WORLD AND WORLD PEACE".

10. PM RIFAI IN NBC INTERVIEW ALSO EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNIZING ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER ARAB AREA OF JERUSALEM BUT, INTERESTINGLY, JORDANIAN MEDIA OMITTED HIS REMARKS IMPLYING THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT JERUSALEM HAS TO BE A DIVIDED CITY.

11. KING HUSSEIN REPEATED HIS OFT-QUOTED THEME THAT "ISRAEL CAN HAVE TERRITORY OR SHE CAN HAVE

PEACE. SHE CANNOT HAVE BOTH AND
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OUR POSITION AT

GENEVA WILL BE THE SAME--PEACE THROUGH WITHDRAWAL". KING CONCLUDED SPEECH ON OPTIMISTIC NOTE BY INDICATING "I HAVE NEVER KNOWN A TIME WHICH SEEMED MORE FAVORABLE FOR FINDING A SOLUTION", CITING FOLLOWING FACTORS: POSITIVE SPIRIT OF ARAB LEADERSHIP SINCE OCTOBER WAR; ISRAEL'S NEED TO RECONSIDER CONCEPT OF SECURITY ("IN 1974 ISRAEL HELD IN OCCUPATION TEN TIMES THE LAND SHE HELD BEFORE THE JUNE 1967 WAR AND LOST TEN TIMES AS MANY MEN"); WORLD DIMENSION OF PROBLEM AND CHALLENGE TO US OF SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP TO ISRAEL.

12. COMMENT: THESE TWO RECENT APPEARANCES BY KING HUSSEIN AND PM RIFAI CONSTITUTE COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC STATEMENT OF CURRENT GOJ POSITION ON MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS. WE SEE CONCILIATORY PUBLIC STATEMENTS RE PALESTINIANS AS DESIGNED TACTICALLY TO PROMOTE RAPPROCHEMENT WITH EGYPT ON THIS ISSUE PRIOR TO KING HUSSEIN'S FORTHCOMING TRIP TO CAIRO. HOWEVER, WHILE KING'S AND PM'S STATEMENTS CONCEDE POSSIBILITY OF EVENTUAL SEPARATE PLO REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA CONFERENCE AND EVENTUAL RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO DECIDE WHETHER TO FORM A SEPARATE STATE, GOJ IN OUR VIEW STILL MAINTAINS CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE OVER WEST BANK ISSUE BY CONTINUING TO EMPHASIZE JORDANIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT AS MEANS OF EFFECTING ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND BY MAINTAINING POSITION IMPLYING THAT ALL PALESTINIANS (NOT JUST CURRENT WEST BANK RESIDENTS) WOULD DETERMINE POLITICAL DESTINY OF WEST BANK. SIMILARLY, WE VIEW JORDANIAN INSISTENCE ON PRINCIPLE OF ARAB SOVEREIGNTY OVER JERUSALEM AS A GESTURE TOWARDS SOLIDARITY WITH KING FAISAL ON SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE WHICH COULD AT SAME TIME ACCOMMODATE CONSIDERABLE FLEXIBILITY REGARDING PRACTICAL ON-THE-GROUND ARRANGEMENTS IN JERUSALEM. FINALLY, JORDANIAN PUBLIC ADMISSION THAT ITS DISENGAGEMENT PROPOSALS AWAIT ISRAELI REPLY UNDOUBTEDLY DESIGNED BUILD PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO TAKE JORDANIAN PROPOSALS SERIOUSLY.

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Message Attributes

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